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Soko Tomita and Masahiko Tomita. *A Bibliographical Catalogue of Italian Books Printed in England 1603-1642*. Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. xxiv, 578 p. ill. ISBN: 9781409422891. £80 (hardback).

In 2009, Soko Tomita published *A Bibliographical Catalogue of Italian Books Printed in England 1558–1603*. With this second volume, she continues to investigate the production of Italian books in early modern England by extending her survey to the Jacobean era, up until the beginning of the Civil War. The author, this time joined in her effort by Masahiko Tomita, described 187 new bibliographical records of Italian books printed in England. An appendix of 45 editions not included in the first volume was also added.

The bibliography proper is introduced by a brief survey, which justifies the selection of materials – books in, printed news out (4) – and offers insights into the choice of the timespan examined. The charts and tables provided here mirror those included in the 2009 bibliography, and offer an easy comparison between the two periods. An eighth table, listing “News and Newsbooks on Italy Printed in England 1603-1642,” represents the main innovation, and allows the reader to find information about those items excluded (perhaps controversially) from the bibliography. Well aware that considering vernacular culture alone is not enough to convey the dissemination of ideas in the early modern period, the authors also provide a table of Italian books in Latin printed in England at the time.

This is a generous resource, conceived with the preoccupation of making knowledge available and exploitable by further research in the field. This is openly declared: the goal of the catalogue is to provide “information that is indispensable for research” (5) in the field. It does this extremely well. The volume is designed as the natural continuation of the first, which is particularly helpful for those scholars whose work transcends strict periodization. The entries are numbered following those in the first volume, which results in a straightforward reference system for those who wish to use these two bibliographies in tandem. Each entry is detailed and ambitious in scope, including standard references, a diplomatic transcription of title page and colophon, citation from the Stationers’ Register if present, and punctual description of contents. The authors also attempted to identify, when possible, the sources used for translations into English. Not only is data provided when present, but an explicit indication is given if specific features of or about each entry are not available: therefore the reader will not have to double-check matters such as the following: whether the edition was, in fact, recorded in the Stationers’ Register; if there was a colophon; or if the authors missed the dedication. Nothing here went amiss.

Overall, this is an excellent, commendable piece of work. Indeed, it must be remarked that the form in which it appears – a paper bibliography – does not quite do it justice. The information reported here with such wealth of detail is so heavily interlinked that a database might have been a more suitable host than a book. Despite the fact that this book reviewer is a convinced supporter of printed bibliographies, the huge amount of work behind this thoroughly researched catalogue would become far more apparent if networks, connections and relationships between people, texts and the marketplace of print were just a click away. Nonetheless, the book is recommended to all scholars interested in the dissemination of Italian culture in early modern Europe. If it is true that the choice of presentation may not show off quite enough the effort that went into compiling this work, it will certainly ensure its longevity.

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[SHARP News, 21 August 2016.](#)